

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 STATE 007953
ORIGIN ACDA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 SOE-02 AF-10 ARA-14
CIAE-00 DODE-00 EA-12 PM-05 H-02 INR-07 L-03
NASA-02 NEA-10 NSAE-00 NSC-05 SP-02 PA-02 PRS-01
DOE-11 OES-07 SS-15 USIA-15 NRC-07 /171 R

DRAFTED BY ACDA/PA:JMPOPE
APPROVED BY ACDA/PA:TAHALSTED
-----124215 120319Z /15

P 112310Z JAN 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY
INFO USDEL MBFR VIENNA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

UNCLAS STATE 007953

USSALTTWO

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PARM

SUBJECT: JANUARY 11 PRESS ROUNDUP

LONDON FOR AMB/EX

1. RICHARD BURT OF NEW YORK TIMES, QUOTING OFFICIALS,
SAID CABINET-LEVEL COMMITTEE AGREED YESTERDAY TO DROP
PREVIOUS INSISTENCE ON INCLUDING BACKFIRE BOMBER IN FORMAL
AGREEMENT IF BREZHNEV PROVIDED LETTER GIVING ASSURANCES
CONCERNING PLANE'S DEPLOYMENT AND CAPABILITIES. CALLING
BACKFIRE "ONE OF THORNIEST ISSUES IN STRATEGIC ARMS TALKS,"
BURT SAID IDEA OF SEPARATING ISSUE FROM AN AGREEMENT HAS
CAUSED DIVISIONS WITHIN GOVERNMENT, WITH JOINT CHIEFS OF
STAFF OPPOSED TO PROPOSAL. BURT SAID OFFICIALS TOLD HIM
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 STATE 007953

U.S. HAS YET TO DETERMINE WHAT BREZHNEV LETTER WOULD SAY,
BUT IT WAS AGREED THAT LETTER SHOULD INCLUDE DEPLOYMENT
LIMITS SOUGHT EARLIER IN FORMAL TREATY, INCLUDING RESTRIC-
TIONS ON USE OF BASES AND REFUELING. BURT COMMENTED
"RUSSIANS HAVE NOT YET BEEN INFORMED OF PROPOSAL, AND
OFFICIALS SAID APPROACH MIGHT STILL BE MODIFIED. HOWEVER,
PROPOSED LETTER IS VIEWED AS BEST WAY TO RESOLVE DISPUTE."

NOTING THAT JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF TAKE "MORE OMINOUS VIEW" OF BACKFIRE'S POTENTIAL THAN PENTAGON'S CIVILIAN LEADERSHIP OR OTHER AGENCIES, BURT SAID SOVIET NEGOTIATORS HAD REFUSED TO ACCEPT RESTRICTIONS ON BOMBER IN CONTEXT OF NEW ARMS PACKAGE. "AS RESULT, OFFICIALS OF WHITE HOUSE AND ACDA ARE SAID TO HAVE PRESSED FOR SEPARATING ISSUE FROM GENEVA TALKS," BURT REPORTED. HE POINTED OUT SOME OFFICIALS SAY BREZHNEV PLEDGE WOULD BE TANTAMOUNT TO FORMAL AGREEMENT AND MOSCOW WOULD NOT RISK GOING BACK ON ITS PROMISES FOR FEAR OF JEOPARDIZING ARMS PACT. OTHERS, HE ADDED, SAY ASSURANCES WOULD BE MEANINGLESS UNLESS THEY WERE INCLUDED IN FORMAL AGREEMENT. "THEY SAY LETTER FROM MR. BREZHNEV WOULD NOT HAVE LEGAL STANDING OF AN INTERNATIONAL TREATY AND, IF MOSCOW FAILED TO LIVE UP TO TERMS, U.S. WOULD HAVE NO BASIS FOR SAYING AN ACCORD HAD BEEN JEOPARDIZED," BURT REPORTED. HE QUOTED OFFICIALS AS SAYING ADMINISTRATION WAS LIKELY TO RUN INTO OPPOSITION ON CAPITOL HILL FROM CRITICS SUCH AS SENATOR JACKSON. "CRITICS HAVE ALREADY SUGGESTED THAT MOSCOW HAS FAILED TO LIVE UP TO UNDERSTANDINGS ATTACHED TO PREVIOUS ARMS ACCORDS CONCLUDED IN 1972, AND HAVE SAID NEW AGREEMENT MUST MINIMIZE OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHEATING," BURT CONTINUED. BURT SAID OFFICIALS AGREE THAT BACKFIRE SHOULD NOT BE DEPLOYED AT ARCTIC BASES, AND PENTAGON IS PUSHING FOR NUMBER OF ADDITIONAL LIMITATIONS, INCLUDING CEILING ON TANKER PLANES, AND AN UNDERTAKING TO PHASE OUT OLDER UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 STATE 007953

BOMBERS AS BACKFIRES ENTER SERVICE. ACDA OFFICIALS, BURT ADDED, OPPOSE SOME OF THESE RESTRICTIONS ON GROUND THAT THEY COULD NOT BE VERIFIED AND MIGHT COMPLICATE EFFORT TO INDUCE MOSCOW TO PROVIDE ASSURANCES. (DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN HODDING CARTER WAS ASKED ABOUT BURT STORY AT JAN. 11 PRESS BRIEFING. SPOKESMAN SAID HE HAD NO COMMENT ON STORY AND POINTED OUT "QUESTION OF SOVIET BACKFIRE BOMBER IS STILL AN ISSUE IN SALT TALKS." HE SAID HE COULD NOT GO "INTO ANY OF NEGOTIATING DETAILS.")

2. DREW MIDDLETON OF NEW YORK TIMES SAID DESPITE CONCLUSION REACHED IN ADMINISTRATION STUDY CALLED "MILITARY STRATEGY AND FORCE POSTURE REVIEW," VOCAL GROUP OF ACTIVE AND RETIRED MILITARY OFFICERS AND ACADEMIC EXPERTS ON SOVIET UNION BELIEVE THAT FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCE OF PERCEPTION BETWEEN U.S. AND USSR ON NATURE OF NUCLEAR WAR MUST BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IF AN EQUITABLE TREATY IS TO BE WRITTEN. STUDY CONCLUDED THAT NEITHER U.S. NOR USSR COULD WIN STRATEGIC NUCLEAR WAR, BUT MIDDLETON SAID MILITARY AND ACADEMIC SOURCES REPORT AN INCREASING AMOUNT OF EVIDENCE THAT RUSSIANS BELIEVE NUCLEAR WAR WITH U.S. AND ITS EUROPEAN ALLIES COULD BE FOUGHT AND WON WITHIN

LIMITS OF CASUALTIES AND MATERIAL DESTRUCTION ACCEPTABLE TO SOVIET UNION. "CONSEQUENTLY," HE SAID, "SOVIET PRODUCTION OF STRATEGIC AND NUCLEAR WEAPONS IS BEING TAILORED TO HIGH ACCURACY, SOVIET MILITARY DOCTRINE ENVISAGES FIGHTING AND WINNING NUCLEAR WAR, AND EXTENSIVE

EFFORTS ARE BEING MADE IN SOVIET UNION TO DISPERSE INDUSTRY AND BUILD AIR RAID SHELTERS." POLITICAL LEADERSHIP IN U.S., MIDDLETON POINTED OUT, HOLDS THAT NUCLEAR WAR WOULD BE CATASTROPHIC TO BOTH SIDES WITH NO WINNERS OR LOSERS. "TO MANY EXPERTS, OFFICIAL AND UNOFFICIAL WHO STUDY SOVIET MILITARY AND POLITICAL DOCTRINE, THIS FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCE OF PERCEPTION INHERENTLY IS MORE SERIOUS THREAT TO LASTING DETENTE THAN CURRENT DISPUTES UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 STATE 007953

OVER TYPES OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS SYSTEMS TO BE DEPLOYED," MIDDLETON SAID. HE SAID TWO THEMES HAVE FIGURED SIGNIFICANTLY IN SOVIET MILITARY WRITING IN LAST 12 YEARS: IMPORTANCE OF SURPRISE, EVEN TO POINT OF PREEMPTIVE NUCLEAR ATTACK, AND USE IN MAJOR WAR OF ALL WEAPONS AVAILABLE--NUCLEAR, CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL. "RECENTLY THIRD THEME HAS BEEN DEVELOPED," MIDDLETON CONTINUED. "THIS IS THAT SELECTIVE USE OF ACCURATE NUCLEAR WEAPONS CAN REDUCE MATERIAL DAMAGE IN THEATERS OF WAR. INFERENCE DRAWN BY SOME WESTERN ANALYSTS IS THAT SOVIET UNION EXPECTS THAT IN AN INVASION OF WESTERN EUROPE IT COULD DO MAXIMUM DAMAGE TO TROOP CONCENTRATIONS, DEPOTS AND AIRFIELDS WHILE DESTRUCTION OF INDUSTRIAL PLANTS COULD BE KEPT AT MINIMUM."

3. RUDY ABRAMSON, WRITING IN JANUARY 8 LOST ANGELES TIMES, SAID SALT TWO TREATY WILL BE "MOST COMPLEX AND PERHAPS MOST IMPORTANT DOCUMENT TO COME BEFORE 95TH CONGRESS." ALTHOUGH TREATY HAS NOT BEEN COMPLETED, ABRAMSON POINTED OUT, GENERAL OUTLINES OF AGREEMENT ALREADY HAVE BEEN LEAKED, SETTING OFF HEATED DEBATES THAT ARE LIKELY TO REVERBERATE FOR REST OF YEAR. OPPOSING CAMPS WITHIN ARMS CONTROL COMMUNITY HAVE BECOME POLARIZED INTO FACTIONS LED--"ALMOST PERSONIFIED"--BY PAUL WARNKE AND PAUL NITZE, ABRAMSON SAID. HE EXPLAINED THAT FUNDAMENTAL ARGUMENT UNDERLYING SALT DEBATE IS DISPUTE OVER MUTUAL DETERRENCE. "QUESTION IS WHETHER BOTH U.S. AND SOVIET UNION HAVE ENOUGH STRATEGIC ARMS TO ASSURE THAT OTHER WILL NEVER ATTACK FIRST." TIMES STAFF WRITER SAID "NITZE'S ARGUMENT IS THAT SOVIET UNION IS WORKING TO ACHIEVE--THEORETICALLY AT LEAST--ABILITY TO FIGHT AND WIN NUCLEAR WAR...WHILE ARMS CONTROL PROPONENTS ACCUSE NITZE OF RAISING UNJUSTIFIED FEARS OF SOVIETS, STRATEGISTS WHO UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 05 STATE 007953

ARE MORE SKEPTICAL ABOUT SOVIET INTENTIONS VIEW WARNKE AS TOO EAGER TO AGREE WITH MOSCOW...ALTHOUGH WARNKE IS NOT ARCHITECT OF DETAILS IN TREATY NOW BEING NEGOTIATED, SOME CONSERVATIVES SEE HIM AS DEVICE FOR ATTACKING AGREEMENT POLITICALLY." ABRAMSON SAID "ALTHOUGH NITZE IS ACCUSED OF BEING OVERLY TECHNICAL AND OF BASING HIS JUDGMENTS SOLELY ON SYSTEMS ANALYSIS TECHNIQUES, IT IS OFTEN ACKNOWLEDGED THAT SALT CRITICS ARGUE THEIR POSITIONS ON

MORE SUBSTANTIVE GROUNDS THAN DO ARDENT ARMS CONTROLLERS... NOW THERE ARE EFFORTS BY PRO-ARMS CONTROL FORCES IN CONGRESS--SENATOR GARY HART, FOR EXAMPLE--TO SUPPORT ARMS TREATY ON ITS OWN MERITS RATHER THAN FALL BACK ON RATIONALE THAT IT IS NECESSARY FOR SAKE OF DETENTE." ABRAMSON CONCLUDED THAT FATE OF SALT TWO TREATY IN SENATE "WILL DEPEND TO CONSIDERABLE EXTENT ON WHETHER CONGRESS STILL BELIEVES THAT ASSURED DESTRUCTION IS AN ADEQUATE POLICY ON WHICH TO BASE WEAPONS DECISIONS." CHRISTOPHER

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, PRESS SUMMARIES, ARMS CONTROL MEETINGS, SALT (ARMS CONTROL)
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 11 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE007953
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: JPMPOPE
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780018-0064
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780173/aaaackaj.tel
Line Count: 193
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 9b3c8be4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN ACDA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08 feb 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3790440
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: JANUARY 11 PRESS ROUNDUP LONDON FOR AMB/EX
TAGS: PARM, US, UR
To: GENEVA USSALTTWO
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/9b3c8be4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014